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Message Text

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E.O. 11652: N:A
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SUBJECT: BAHRAIN FOREIGN TRADE FIGURES FOR 1977

1. SUMMARY: BAHRAIN HAS RELEASED ITS FOREIGN TRADE STATISTICS FOR 1977. THESE SHOW A MUCH MORE REASONABLE AND SUSTAINABLE GROWTH OF 15 PER CENT IN BOTH IMPORTS AND EXPORTS, AS COMPARED TO GROWTH RATES IN RECENT YEARS OF OVER 50 PER CENT. THE NEWS IS NOT GOOD FOR THE UNITED STATES AS THEFIGURES SHOW THAT WE ARE THE ONLY MAJOR SUPPLIER TO SHOW A DECLINE IN SALES TO BAHRAIN AS WE SLIP TO THIRD PLACE BEHIND THE UK AND JAPAN FROM OUR USUAL SECOND PLACE POSITION. THE FIGURES SHOW NO RPT NO SIGNIFICANT CHANGES IN THE PRODUCT MIXES OF EITHER IMPORTS OR EXPORTS. END SUMMARY.

2. GOB TRADE FIGURES FOR 1977 NON PETROLEUM TRADE SHOW TOTAL IMPORTS OF BD 44,852,754 ($1,112,131,885) FOR A GROWTH IN
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IMPORTS OF 15 PER CENT OVER 1976. THE U.K. CONTINUES TO LEAD AS THE MAJOR SUPPLIER ($217 MILLION) WITH 20 PER CENT OF THE MARKET AND 27 PER CENT GROWTH OVER THE 1976 FIGURE. JAPAN FOLLOWS WITH 16 PER CENT OF THE MARKET ($172 MILLION) AND 28 PER CENT GROWTH TH. THE U.S. SLIPS FROM SECOND PLACE TO THIRD WITH 12 PER CENT OF THE MARKET ($133,181,935) AND A 7 PER CENT DECLINE IN SALES COMPARED TO 1976. FOLLOWING IN ORDER ARE

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WEST GERMANY (6 PER CENT AND PLUS 5 PER CENT), PRC (6 PER CENT AND PLUS 62 PER CENT) AND AUSTRALIA (5 PER CENT AND PLUS 28 PER CENT).

3. PRODUCT MIX IN IMPORTS FOLLOWS MUCH THE SAME ORDER OBSERVED IN RECENT YEARS WITH VARIOUS CATEGORIES OF MACHINERY AND TRANSPORT EQUIPMENT PREDOMINATING. SITC 71-MACHINERY OTHER THAN ELECTRICAL COMPRISES 15.30 PER CENT ($171 MILLION) ; SITC 72-ELECTRICAL MACHINERY AND APPLIANCES 10.4 PER CENT ($116 MILLION); SITC YJY#NON-METALIC MINERAL MANFS N.E.S. 5 PER CENT ($56 MILLION); AND SITC 84-CLOTHING 4.9 PER CENT ($55 MILLION).

4. BAHRAIN'S 1977 NON-PETROLEUM EXPORTS TOTALED BD 157,605,712 ($394,014,280) ALSO GROWING 15 PER CENT OVER 1976. THE PRODUCT MIX REMAINS MUCH THE SAME WITH SITC 68-NON-FERROUS METALS PREDOMINATING AT $108 MILLION (28 PER CENT). SITC 71 FOLLOWS WITH 68 MILLION (17 PER CENT); SITC 84 AT 8.5 PER CENT; SITC 72 AT 7 PER CENT ; AND SITC 65 AT 5.5 PER CENT. READERS WILL NOTE THAT SEVERAL SITC CATEGORIES ARE REPRESENTED AS BOTH MAJOR IMPORTS AND MAJOR EXPORTS. THIS DEMONSTRATES THE FACT THAT A SIGNIFICANT AMOUNT OF BAHRAIN'S IMPORTS ARE STILL RE-EXPORTED TO NEIGHBORING COUNTRIES IN SPITE OF RECENT IMPROVEMENTS IN PORTS AND OTHER INFRASTRUCTURE IN THOSE COUNTRIES.

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5. FURTHER DEMONSTRATION OF THIS RE-EXPORT TRADE IS THE FACT THAT SAUDI ARABIA AGAIN RECEIVED 51 PER CENT ($201 MILLION) OF BAHRAIN'S EXPORTS. OTHER MAJOR PURCHASERS WERE JAPAN (15 PER CENT), IRAN (8.9 PER CENT), PRC (3.8 PER CENT), UAE (3.6 PER CENT), KUWAIT (3.4 PER CENT), U.S. (3.4 PER CENT), U.S. (2.3 PER CENT) AND QATAR (2.3 PER CENT).

6. THE EMBASSY IS AWAITING THE LATER RELEASE OF MORE COMPLETE TRADE FIGURES WHICH BREAK IMPORTS DOWN INTO COMMODITY BY COUNTRY. THIS WILL PERMIT SOME ANALYSIS OF THE CATEGORIES IN WHICH THE DECLINE IN U.S. SALES TO BAHRAIN OCCURRED. HOWEVER, BAHRAIN'S USE OF THE BROADER SITC CATEGORIES IN ITS TRADE STATISTICS DOES NOT PERMIT FINE ANALYSIS. FROM SIMPLY VIEWING WHAT IS OCCURRING ON BAFW# IN STREETS THE EMBASSY WOULD PROPOSE THAT AUTOMOBILES IS ONE AREA IN WHICH JAPAN IS OVERTAKING A GTJ# U.S. MARKET. IN JUST THE PAST YEAR NUMBER OF THE

SAMLL HONDA AND THE LARGE, LUXURY MODELS OF TOYOTA AND DATSUN APPEAR TO HAVE INCREASED DRAMATICALLY. THE LARGE JAPANESE AUTO DEFINITELY COMPETES AGAINST THE U.S. MODELS IN BAHRAIN. CLUVERIUS

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